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PERCEPTIONS OF THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN THE SMALL RURAL SCHOOL.

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A RESEARCH SURVEY IS DESCRIBED WHICH EXAMINES THE TEACHER'S ROLE IN THE SMALL RURAL SCHOOL AS IT IS PERCEIVED BY PRINCIPALS AND TEACHERS CURRENTLY EMPLOYED IN SMALL RURAL SCHOOLS, BY FACULTY MEMBERS IN COLLEGES AND DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION, AND BY TEACHER TRAINING STUDENTS IN FIVE STATES PARTICIPATING IN THE WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT. THE DOCUMENT PRESENTS THE OBJECTIVES, PROCEDURES, TYPES OF QUESTIONNAIRES, THE RESULTING DATA, AND THE SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS THAT WERE IDENTIFIED WITH THIS STUDY. (JH)

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# Perceptions of the Teacher's Role in the Small Rural School

*A Study*

*by*

*Dr. Walter R. Borg*

for the

WESTERN STATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT

1965

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# Perceptions of the Teacher's Role in the Small Rural School

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS


| | Page |
|---|---|
| Introduction | v |
| Summary and Conclusions | 1 |
| The Data | 7 |
| The Teacher Questionnaire | 8 |
| The Principal Questionnaire | 17 |
| The Faculty Questionnaire | 24 |
| The Student Questionnaire | 31 |

# LIST OF TABLES


| Title | No. | Page |
|---|---|---|
| Enrollment of Schools Employing Sampled Teachers | T1 | 8 |
| Population of Communities in Which Schools Are Located That Employ Sampled Teachers | T2 | 8 |
| Size of Home Communities of Teachers Who Prefer Teaching in Small Rural Schools or Those Who Prefer Larger Urban and Suburban Schools | T3 | 9 |
| Adequacy of Preparation as Perceived by Teacher Sample | T4 | 10 |
| Factors Leading Teachers to Accept Their First Teaching Position in a Small School | T5 | 11 |
| A Comparison of the Recreational Interests of Teachers Who Prefer the Small, Rural School and Those Who Prefer Larger Urban and Suburban Schools | T6 | 12 |
| Recreational Interests of Male and Female Teachers in Small Rural Schools | T7 | 13 |
| Advantages of Teaching in a Small Rural School as Reported by Teachers Who Prefer This Type of School vs. Those Who Prefer Larger Urban and Suburban Schools | T8 | 14 |
| Disadvantages of Teaching in a Small Rural School as Reported by Teachers Who Prefer This Type of School vs. Those Who Prefer Larger Urban and Suburban Schools | T9 | 15 |
| Preferences and Teaching Plans of Teachers Who Teach Different Numbers of Grade Levels | T10 | 16 |
| Grade Levels Taught in Schools of Responding Principals | P1 | 17 |
| Population of Communities in Which Responding Principals Resided at Time They Graduated from High Schools | P2 | 18 |
| Enrollment of High Schools from Which Respondents in the Principals' Sample Graduated | P3 | 18 |
| Recreational Interests of Principals of Small Rural Schools | P4 | 19 |
| Advantages of Teaching in a Small School as Perceived by Principals of Small Rural Schools | P5 | 20 |
| Disadvantages of Teaching in a Small School as Perceived by Principals of Small Rural Schools | P6 | 21 |
| Weaknesses in the Preparation of New Teachers as Perceived by Principals of Small Rural Schools | P7 | 22 |
| Factors Leading to the Decisions of Principals Sampled to Accept Their First Teaching Position in a Small Rural School | P8 | 22 |
| Factors Leading Teachers to Continue Teaching in Small Rural Schools as Perceived by Principal Sample | P9 | 23 |
| Factors Leading Teachers to Leave Teaching Positions in Small Rural Schools as Perceived by the Principals' Sample | P10 | 23 |
| Population of Communities in Which Faculty Members Resided at Time of High School Graduation | F1 | 24 |

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (Continued)


| | No. | Page |
|---|---|---|
| Enrollment of High Schools from Which Responding Faculty Members Graduated | F2 | 24 |
| Amount of Experience of Faculty Members in Small Rural Schools | F3 | 25 |
| Year of Most Recent Experience of Responding Faculty Members as a Teacher or Principal in a Small Rural School | F4 | 26 |
| Small School Opportunities as Viewed by Faculty Members Having vs. Not Having Small School Experience | F5 | 27 |
| Advantages of Teaching in a Small School as Perceived by Faculty Members Having and Not Having Small School Experience | F6 | 27 |
| Disadvantages of Teaching in a Small School as Perceived by Faculty Members Having and Not Having Small School Experience | F7 | 29 |
| Job Preferences of Secondary Teacher Training Students by State | S1 | 31 |
| Job Preferences of Elementary Teacher Training Students by State | S2 | 32 |
| Job Preferences of Secondary Teacher Training Students of Different Marital Status | S3 | 32 |
| Job Preferences of Elementary Teacher Training Students of Different Marital Status | S4 | 33 |
| Job Preferences of Teacher Training Students from Different-Sized Communities | S5 | 34 |
| Family Stability During Public School Years and Preference for Small School Teaching Positions | S6 | 35 |
| Advantages of Teaching in a Small Rural School as Perceived by Students Who Prefer and Do Not Prefer to Teach in a Small Rural School | S7 | 36 |
| Disadvantages of Teaching in a Small Rural School as Perceived by Different Groups | S8 | 37 |
| Job Preferences of Teacher Training Students Compared with Their Preferred Recreational Activities | S9 | 38 |
| Recreational Interests of Secondary Teacher Education Students Who Prefer Teaching Positions in Different-Sized Communities | S10 | 39 |

## INTRODUCTION

For many years now, several groups have been involved in research and development programs for improvement of isolated small schools. Most recent have been The Catskill Area Project, Oneonta, New York; The Rocky Mountain Area Project for Small High Schools, Denver, Colorado; The Texas Small Schools Project, Austin; The Western States Small Schools Project, Denver, Colorado; and The Upper Midwest Small Schools Project, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks.

Although they have operated in different organizational and regional settings, they have been pursuing similar objectives:

1. Broadened educational experience for youngsters
2. Increased attention to the unique educational needs of each individual
3. Improvement of the instructional setting in rural schools

Teacher preparation and inservice education have been common elements of all these projects, and in most cases the emphasis has been given to the inservice, post-baccalaureate level. None of the projects has adopted as a major objective the experimental or innovative approach to the *preservice* preparation of teachers. In fact, little rationale exists, except at the discussion stage, regarding the skills and understandings which teachers in rural schools uniquely require.

Recently, however, the interest of the personnel from the Western States Small Schools Project has turned toward this problem. We have naturally assumed that teachers who provide truly for individual differences should have had a similar education as preparation. This is not, however, a unique need for teachers in rural areas. Nevertheless, it has been our hunch that for individualizing instruction in rural schools, the highly essential but nebulous combination of content, method, insight and analytical skills must always take cognizance of the rural environment, philosophy and human expectations. We have had a further hunch that should we find the proper combination of personality, individual aspiration, and professional commitment, the recruitment of good, longer tenure teachers for remote areas could be made more effective.

Since it is rarely an admirable procedure, except for gamblers, to use only hunches as bases for action, the WSSSP staff elected to seek more objective data on the extent and type of preparation available for teachers before they enter rural schools; why they select their first teaching positions; and what influence their professors and associates have on their professional decision. We felt that one way to start would be the assessment of how various groups perceive these various influences on their professional lives. Thus, the following evaluation and analysis of perceptions reveals much about education in rural communities and much about the process which prepares (or fails to prepare) teachers, principals, and superintendents for their jobs in the small towns.

Because of his undoubted position in educational research and his understanding of rural education problems, Dr. Walter R. Borg was selected to coordinate the study and to analyze it for implications. Dr. Borg's analysis and summarizing statements give interesting overviews on certain features of teacher education; the tables and data which he prepared provide leads to other answers and help raise additional questions.

The process of individualization of instruction is one requiring an intensive and continuous analysis of each person's needs in academic, vocational, personal and social development. It requires an active interaction between each individual and his expanding environment. Hence, we assume that those planning to teach in rural schools have some special preparation needs which can be defined and distinguished from the needs of those who will teach in the suburbs or in the core cities. Therefore, the WSSSP personnel dedicate this report to the cause of individualization of instruction at every level of education.

Ralph G. Bohrson, *Coordinator*

## Summary and Conclusions

During the past twenty years of teacher shortages, many administrators in small rural schools have found hiring and holding satisfactory teachers to be a nearly impossible task. Many teaching positions in such schools go unfilled each year and many others are filled in desperation by marginal teachers, working under some form of emergency certification, who cannot obtain a teaching position any place else. Yet, in spite of the difficult situation generally encountered in keeping small rural schools fully and adequately staffed, there is another side to the coin. There are many outstanding teachers employed in such schools who, we suspect, value certain aspects of the small rural school environment and elect to remain in preference to accepting a position in a larger city school. If our speculation is correct, that such teachers remain in small rural schools because of a unique set of advantages that appeal to their value systems, then it seems likely that there are other competent teachers who are discontent in city teaching positions who, if they only knew it, are ideally suited to the small rural teaching environment. In this paper, a small rural school is defined as one averaging fewer than 50 pupils per grade in a community of less than 2500 population.

## Objectives

The broad objective of this research was to examine the small school as it is perceived by four different educational groups and tentatively identify some of the variables that might relate to teaching success and satisfaction in the small rural school. Principals and teachers currently employed in small rural schools, faculty members in colleges and departments of education and teacher training students in the five states participating in the Western States Small Schools Project were surveyed. The specific objective of the four surveys included in the project were as follows:

1. To compare teachers currently employed in small rural schools who prefer such positions with those who would prefer to teach in a larger urban or suburban school in terms of background, interests, motivations and perceptions.

2. To study principals currently employed in small rural schools and examine their background, interests, and motivations, as well as their perceptions of teachers whom they consider to be successful and unsuccessful in the small school teaching situation.

The surveys of teachers and principals currently employed in small rural schools probably give us our most useful firsthand information on the teachers' role. If, however, we are to identify persons well suited for teaching in small rural schools and attract such persons to these positions, we must also look to the colleges and universities from which our new teachers come. Therefore, additional surveys of students currently in teacher training programs and of faculty members in colleges of education were carried

out to learn how these groups perceived the teacher's role in the small rural school. Among the specific objectives to be achieved in these latter two surveys were the following:

1. To study the backgrounds, interests, and perceptions of teacher training students who express a preference for teaching in a small rural school as compared to those who express a preference for teaching in larger urban or suburban schools.

2. To determine how closely the advantages and disadvantages of teaching in a small rural school, as perceived by teacher training students, agree with the perceptions of teachers and principals who have had direct experience in such schools. Have teacher training students developed stereotypes concerning the small rural school that differ from the perceptions of persons who have direct experience in such schools?

3. To study the backgrounds, experience, and perceptions of Education faculty members regarding teaching in small rural schools. Do these faculty members generally have favorable or unfavorable perceptions of the small rural school? Are these perceptions based on firsthand experience, and if so, how recent is their experience? The goal of the faculty questionnaire was to appraise the aforementioned characteristics of Education faculty members so as to gain some insight into the possible influences that these faculty members may exert upon teacher training students.

## Procedure

In order to carry out this project, instructions for selecting samples and collecting data were prepared and sent to each of the State Project Directors involved in the Western States Small Schools Project. The following procedures were employed for samples in each of the participating states:

1. A list was made up of all principals of schools having fewer than 50 pupils per grade located in communities of less than twenty-five hundred population. The questionnaire was sent to all principals listed. A letter of transmittal and a return envelope was sent along with the questionnaire.

2. To identify the sample that was to receive the teacher's questionnaire, fifteen elementary and fifteen secondary schools in each state were selected at random from the aforementioned list of principals. Each teacher currently employed in the schools selected was sent a copy of the teacher questionnaire, along with a letter of transmittal and a return envelope.

3. In order to survey the Education faculty members, each State Director was instructed to list all his state's College or Department of Education faculty members from all colleges and universities that prepared teachers for certification. State Directors were also instructed to obtain the cooperation of the dean or education department chairman in each institution and route the faculty questionnaires through his office. Generally, State Directors were unable to contact all colleges and universities in their respective

states in the time available. Each State Director, however, collected faculty questionnaire data from at least two such institutions in his state.

4. The student questionnaire was to be administered by the State WSSSP Director or his representative to junior and senior students in teacher education programs. The questionnaire was to be administered to all students in two courses required for elementary teacher certification and two courses required for secondary teacher certification in each of three institutions. Again, time did not permit carrying out the planned sampling procedures fully, although questionnaire data from at least one institution in each state were obtained.

There is some tendency, however, for teachers with rural backgrounds to more frequently prefer teaching in small rural schools.

## Summary and Conclusions

The study was carried out as part of the Western States Small Schools Project and involved the cooperation of the Project Coordinator and the State Project Directors in Arizona, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah. The broad objective of the study was to survey the perceptions of four different educational groups concerning the teachers' role in the small rural school. Survey data were collected from 593 teachers and 196 principals currently employed in small rural schools. Additional survey data were obtained from 254 faculty members of colleges and departments of education and 629 students currently enrolled in teacher training programs in the participating states.

The reader will note that although sampling procedures could not be carried out exactly as planned, the samples obtained appear to be adequate for the purposes of the survey.

The findings of the four surveys may be summarized as follows:

THE TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

1. The vast majority of teachers currently employed in small rural schools prefer teaching in such schools. This would suggest that these schools offer real attractions for some teachers. A better understanding of these attractions would significantly improve recruiting of teachers for small rural teaching positions.

2. The attractions of the small rural school are not confined to teachers with rural backgrounds. About half of the teachers in this sample came from communities of more than 5000 population.

3. Although the majority of respondents considered their teacher training experience to be satisfactory, a substantial minority made specific criticisms. Elementary teachers most frequently expressed a need for better methods courses in education. Secondary teachers indicated a need for training in more subjects as well as a need for better training in methods. An interview and observational study would be desirable to explore this area in depth.

4. Liking for and identification with small rural community life is an important factor in determining teacher satisfaction in the small rural school.

5. The recreational interests of teachers who prefer small rural schools differ in several ways from the interests of those who would prefer to teach in a larger urban school. Recreational facilities might be used to advantage by all school administrators in recruiting teachers.

6. Teachers who prefer the small rural school perceive as its main advantages the chance to know their students better, the feeling of belonging in the small rural community, and the smaller classes that are often found in small rural schools. They perceive as the main disadvantages of the small rural school the poor physical facilities and the inconveniences of living in a small rural community.

## THE PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

1. A substantial majority of the principals sampled from small rural schools were reared in small rural communities and themselves attended such schools. These data further suggest that the teacher with a rural background is most likely to remain in the small rural school system long enough to attain an administrative position.

2. The recreational interests of the principal sample showed strong emphasis on outdoor activities that are usually more easily available in the small rural community. These data suggest that the individual whose interests are compatible with the recreational activities offered by the small community is somewhat more likely to remain in a small rural teaching or administrative position.

3. The principal sample perceived as the main advantage of the small rural school the chance to know students better, and the feeling of belonging in the small community. Principals perceive the main disadvantage of the small rural school to be poor physical facilities and the inconveniences found in the small rural community. It is interesting to note the very close agreement between the perceived advantages and disadvantages of the small rural school as seen by teachers and principals currently employed in such schools.

In analyzing factors leading to their own acceptance of a teaching position in a small rural school and in their appraisal of teachers whom they considered well adjusted and poorly adjusted to the small rural school situation, the principals placed heavy emphasis upon community factors thus supporting the data obtained from the teacher questionnaire. These data further support the conclusion that adjustment to the small community is probably the most important single factor in the retention of teachers in small rural schools.

## THE FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

1. A substantial proportion of the Education faculty members sampled were reared in small communities and had had direct experience as pupils in small rural schools. About two-thirds of these faculty members had also had experience as teachers and administrators in small schools but relatively few have held such positions in the past ten years. Further evidence regarding the amount of contact which faculty members have had with small rural schools as part of their college teaching positions would be desirable in appraising their understanding of the current situation in such schools.

2. The advantages and disadvantages of teaching in a small rural school as perceived by the faculty member respondents are generally similar to those perceived by principals and teachers currently employed in such schools. This agreement would suggest that the faculty members' perception of the small rural school is a realistic one. These data also seem to indicate that faculty members in the states surveyed were not reacting to stereotypes and did not have strongly negative attitudes or perceptions of the small rural school that might be passed on to teacher education students.

## THE STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Among the elementary teacher training students responding to the student questionnaire, 26.9 per cent indicated that a small rural school teaching position would be their first job preference. This percentage varied among the states from a low of 14.3 per cent in New Mexico to a high of 30.2 per cent in Nevada.

2. Among secondary teacher training students, only 14.6 per cent indicated the small rural teaching position to be their first job preference. Again the percentages varied considerably among states ranging from 6.1 per cent in Utah to 21.4 per cent in Arizona. It may be concluded that a relatively small minority of teacher training students actually prefer a small rural teaching position. Such positions appear to have considerably more appeal in some states than others, suggesting that factors are operating in these states that tend to make such positions more attractive. A study aimed at identifying these factors would be an important step towards solving the staffing problems of small rural schools.

3. Sex and marital status have some influences upon teaching preferences. In general, married men indicate a preference for teaching in the small rural school considerably more frequently than single men, married women, or single women.

4. Teacher training students who are reared in small or medium sized communities are generally more favorable to teaching positions in small rural schools than are teacher training students from cities over 25,000 population.

5. Evidence from the student questionnaire suggests that some

teacher training students might prefer the small rural school because of the security offered the individual in this environment. Teacher training students who prefer teaching in the small rural schools also indicate a marked preference for recreational activities that can be carried out more easily in a small rural community and least prefer those activities more easily carried out in a large city.

All four survey instruments contained unstructured items requesting the respondent to indicate the advantages and disadvantages of teaching in the small rural school. It is noteworthy that for all four groups the most frequently mentioned advantage was the closer contact possible between teacher and pupil in the small rural school. The most frequently mentioned disadvantage on all four questionnaires related to the poor physical facilities that the respondents felt were often found in small rural school situations. There was also reasonably close agreement among the different groups of respondents on other advantages and disadvantages perceived to be important. These data should be of value to small school administrators in that they suggest advantages which could be pointed out profitably in interviewing and recruiting teachers. The administrator might also ask himself how his school stands on some of the more frequently mentioned disadvantages and how these may be overcome so as to make his school more attractive to prospective teachers.

# The Data

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**Tables**

**Definitions**

**Interpretations**

★


| | Page |
|---|---|
| **Teacher Questionnaire** | **8** |
| **Principal Questionnaire** | **17** |
| **Faculty Questionnaire** | **24** |
| **Student Questionnaire** | **31** |

## TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

A total of 593 responses were obtained on the teacher questionnaire, which was designed to obtain information about the characteristics of a sample of teachers in small, rural schools of the five participating states. It also sought to obtain information on the teachers' evaluation of their teacher preparation for work in the small rural school. Information was also collected on factors related to the teachers' decision to accept a position in a small rural school, the teachers' perception of the advantages and disadvantages of teaching in the small rural school, and other related topics. This questionnaire contained 12 alternate choice items, three completion items, and six essay or unstructured response items.

**Table T1**

Enrollment of Schools Employing Sampled Teachers

| *Enrollment* | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 100 | 73 | 12.3 |
| 100-199 | 202 | 34.1 |
| 200-299 | 151 | 25.5 |
| 300-399 | 85 | 14.4 |
| 400-499 | 9 | 1.5 |
| 500-599 | 21 | 3.5 |
| 600-699 | 5 | .8 |
| 700-799 | 4 | .7 |
| 800-899 | 0 | 0 |
| 900 or more | 42 | 7.1 |

Table T1 shows the enrollment of schools currently employing the teachers who responded. It will be noted that over 85 per cent of the responding teachers were employed in schools having fewer than 400 pupils.

**Table T2**

Population of Communities in Which Schools Are Located That Employ Sampled Teachers

| *Population* | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| Under 250 | 32 | 5.4 |
| 250-499 | 113 | 19.1 |
| 500-749 | 92 | 15.5 |
| 750-999 | 61 | 10.3 |
| 1000-1249 | 96 | 16.2 |
| 1250-1499 | 10 | 1.7 |
| 1500-1749 | 62 | 10.4 |
| 1750-1999 | 18 | 3.0 |
| 2000-2500 | 44 | 7.4 |
| Over 2500 | 65 | 11.0 |

Table T2 gives the population of the communities in which the schools employing members of the teacher sample were located. All but eleven per cent of these schools were located in communities

of less than 2500 population. Most of the remaining schools were located in communities of populations so close to 2500 that for all practical purposes they would fit the accepted definition of a small rural school (i.e., having fewer than 50 pupils per grade in a communition population of 2500 or fewer).

The average amount of teaching experience of all kinds reported by the teachers' sample was 10.4 years. The number of individuals having teaching experience in different sized schools was studied and the mean years of experience in each type of school was computed. All responding teachers, of course, had some experience in small rural schools; with about 350 reporting elementary experience and a similar number reporting secondary experience. A total of 170 teachers reported experience in communities of 2500 to 25,000 population. Relatively few of the teachers' sample (66) reported teaching experience in communities of over 25,000 population.

One of the items on the teacher questionnaire requested them to indicate whether they preferred teaching in a small rural school rather than a larger urban or suburban school. As nearly all of the teacher sample came from small rural schools, it is not surprising to note that a substantial majority reported a preference for teaching in this type of school.

In order to determine whether certain characteristics of the teachers sampled were related to their preference for small rural schools, teachers who liked small rural schools were compared with those who would rather teach in larger schools. One of the variables on which these groups were compared was the population of the community in which the teacher resided at the time of graduation from high school.

**Table T3**

Size of Home Communities of Teachers Who Prefer Teaching in Small Rural Schools or Those Who Prefer Larger Urban and Suburban Schools

| | *Prefer Small School* | | *Prefer Larger School* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Home Community* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* |
| Farm | 85 | 83.3 | 17 | 16.7 |
| Under 1000 | 110 | 85.9 | 18 | 14.1 |
| 1000-2500 | 65 | 81.2 | 15 | 18.8 |
| 2500-5000 | 50 | 86.2 | 8 | 13.8 |
| 5000-10,000 | 57 | 83.8 | 11 | 16.2 |
| 10,000-25,000 | 33 | 80.4 | 8 | 19.5 |
| 25,000 or over | 60 | 75.0 | 20 | 25.0 |

This table shows the percentage of teachers from different sized communities who indicated a preference for teaching in the small rural school. It will be noted that for communities under 10,000 population, about 85 per cent preferred the small rural school. For communities of 10,000-25,000, this figure dropped to about 80 per cent, and to 75 per cent for communities over 25,000, suggesting that there is a slight tendency for teachers reared in small communities to prefer teaching in small rural schools.

The size of the high schools from which the responding teachers graduated was also studied to determine whether any relationship existed between experience as a student in a small rural school and preference to teach in such a school. The results of this comparison revealed no consistent relationship between attendance in a small high school and teacher preference for a small rural school.

**Table T4**

Adequacy of Preparation as Perceived by Teacher Sample

| | *Elementary Teachers* | | *Secondary Teachers* | | *All Teachers** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Description* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* |
| More observations of good teaching.. | 7 | 10.4 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 3.6 |
| More student teaching, earlier scheduling of student teaching..... | 12 | 17.9 | 10 | 11.1 | 23 | 13.7 |
| Student teaching in a small rural school ..... | 6 | 9 | 7 | 7.8 | 14 | 8.3 |
| More training in subject matter..... | 3 | 4.5 | 5 | 5.6 | 11 | 6.5 |
| Training in more subjects ..... | 8 | 11.9 | 21 | 23.3 | 36 | 21.4 |
| Teaching ethnic groups such as Negro, Indian, Spanish-American.. | 1 | 1.4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1.2 |
| More training in grouping fast and slow pupils ..... | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1.1 | 3 | 1.8 |
| More practical courses in education. Better methods courses ..... | 24 | 35.8 | 21 | 23.3 | 50 | 29.8 |
| More training in individual differences ..... | 1 | 1.4 | 8 | 8.9 | 11 | 6.5 |
| More training in lesson planning..... | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2.2 | 3 | 1.8 |
| More information on pupil social behavior ..... | 0 | 0 | 5 | 5.6 | 6 | 3.6 |
| How to teach with minimum facilities ..... | 1 | 1.4 | 3 | 3.3 | 6 | 3.6 |
| Training in public relations—how to get along with people ..... | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1.1 | 2 | 1.2 |
| Training in working with several grades or wider age group ..... | 2 | 3 | 3 | 3.3 | 10 | 6.0 |
| Other, not classifiable ..... | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3.3 | 13 | 7.7 |

*Including teachers who teach combinations of elementary and secondary; therefore, percentages are not cumulative.

Teachers were asked whether the education they had received was satisfactory preparation for teaching in the small rural school. Of the teachers responding, 425 considered their training satisfactory, and 168 indicated that it was not suitable and that additional programs would have been desirable. Most frequently mentioned by the 168 teachers was a need for more practical courses in education. Better methods courses were especially mentioned, and a number of the respondents were critical of so-called theoretical courses. Mentioned next most frequently by elementary teachers was the need for more student teaching and for student teaching in the small rural school. Secondary teachers mentioned the need for preparation in more subjects. *These responses suggest that our teacher education programs are certainly not meeting the needs of all teachers in small rural schools.*

**Table T5**

Factors Leading Teachers to Accept Their First Teaching Position in a Small School

| *Reason for Accepting Position* | *Prefer Small Rural School* N | % | *Prefer Larger City School* N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Experience as a student in small schools | 28 | 5.9 | 3 | 3.1 |
| Only job available | 31 | 6.5 | 6 | 6.2 |
| Husband (wife) lived there | 39 | 8.2 | 9 | 9.3 |
| Wanted job near home | 68 | 14.3 | 8 | 8.2 |
| Small classes | 16 | 3.4 | 4 | 4.1 |
| Best offer received | 81 | 17.0 | 25 | 25.8 |
| Like freedom of small school | 31 | 6.5 | 4 | 4.1 |
| Outside interests such as farming | 16 | 3.4 | 6 | 6.2 |
| Better place to raise family | 21 | 4.4 | 3 | 3.1 |
| Prefer living in a small community | 80 | 16.8 | 8 | 8.2 |
| Other responses not classifiable | 64 | 13.5 | 20 | 20.3 |

Another area studied in the questionnaire was concerned with factors that had led teachers to accept their first teaching positions in small rural schools. In this area the sample has been divided, and the factors given by teachers who prefer a small rural school have been compared with those given by teachers who prefer larger schools. Table T5 summarizes these results. The percentages of teachers in these two classifications differ on a number of points. One such difference, for example, indicates that 17.0 per cent of teachers preferring the small rural schools accepted their positions because they were "the best offers received," as against 25.8 per cent of those teachers who would prefer to teach in the larger school. Of those teachers who prefer the small rural school, 16.8 per cent give as their reason for accepting their position that they prefer living in the small community, as against 8.2 per cent of the group who indicate preference for a larger school. These data, plus related responses such as "better place to raise a family," and "wanted job near home," would indicate that a liking for, or identification with, the small community is an important factor in determining whether or not a teacher will be satisfied to remain in a small rural school.

**Table T6**

A Comparison of the Recreational Interests of Teachers Who Prefer the Small, Rural School and Those Who Prefer Larger Urban and Suburban Schools

| | *Prefer Small Rural School* | | *Prefer Larger City School* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Interest* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* |
| Auto tinkering and/or driving | 45 | 9.8 | 15 | 15.6 |
| Bowling | 76 | 16.5 | 18 | 18.6 |
| Church activities | 235 | 51.0 | 33 | 34.4 |
| Crafts such as ceramics, leather, etc. | 79 | 17.1 | 11 | 11.5 |
| Dancing | 69 | 15.0 | 21 | 21.9 |
| Spectator, dramatics and theater | 97 | 21.0 | 26 | 27.1 |
| Participant in dramatics, theater | 37 | 8.0 | 9 | 9.4 |
| Fishing | 155 | 33.6 | 29 | 30.2 |
| Flying | 16 | 3.5 | 4 | 4.1 |
| Gardening | 143 | 31.0 | 18 | 18.6 |
| Golf | 66 | 14.3 | 18 | 18.6 |
| Hiking | 102 | 22.1 | 31 | 32.3 |
| Horseback riding | 105 | 22.8 | 23 | 24.0 |
| Household arts (sewing, cooking, etc.) | 174 | 37.7 | 22 | 22.9 |
| Hunting | 160 | 34.7 | 33 | 34.4 |
| Participation in music (singing, playing an instrument, etc.) | 113 | 24.5 | 22 | 22.9 |
| Spectator, music (concerts, listening to records, etc.) | 141 | 30.6 | 44 | 45.8 |
| Participation, outdoor sports (skiing, swimming, skating, tennis) | 175 | 38.0 | 46 | 47.9 |
| Spectator, outdoor sports (football, basketball, baseball, etc.) | 222 | 48.2 | 57 | 59.4 |
| Painting, sculpture, graphic arts | 48 | 10.4 | 13 | 13.5 |
| Photography | 64 | 13.9 | 11 | 11.5 |
| Reading | 289 | 62.7 | 64 | 66.7 |
| Television | 164 | 35.6 | 39 | 40.6 |
| Travel; sight-seeing | 255 | 55.3 | 55 | 46.8 |
| Indoor collections (stamps, etc.) | 9 | 2.0 | 0 | 0 |
| Outdoor collections (rocks, etc.) | 12 | 2.6 | 3 | 3.1 |
| Home workshop projects | 8 | 1.7 | 1 | 1.0 |
| Other recreational activities not classifiable | 58 | 12.6 | 13 | 13.5 |

Both groups most frequently list reading as a major recreational interest. For the group who prefer the small rural school, the most frequently checked recreational interests were reading, travel and sightseeing, church activities, spectator-outdoor sports, and participation in outdoor sports in that order. For those who prefer the larger urban or suburban school, the most frequently checked activities were reading, spectator-outdoor sports, participation in outdoor sports, travel and sightseeing, and spectator of musical activities such as concerts. Although the interest patterns are fairly similar for these two groups, the teachers who prefer the small schools generally show more interest in recreational activities that are easier to participate in or are generally more favored in the small rural community.

It should be remembered that nearly all of the teachers who responded are currently teaching in small rural schools. It seems likely that larger differences in recreational interest would be found if later research were to draw its sample from both urban and suburban schools.

## Table T7

Recreational Interests of Male and Female Teachers in Small Rural Schools

| | *Male Teachers* | | *Female Teachers* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Interest* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* |
| Auto tinkering and/or driving | 46 | 18.4 | 14 | 5.0 |
| Bowling | 52 | 20.9 | 42 | 15.0 |
| Church activities | 100 | 40.2 | 168 | 60.0 |
| Crafts such as ceramics, leather, etc. | 34 | 13.7 | 56 | 20.0 |
| Dancing | 25 | 10.0 | 65 | 23.2 |
| Spectator, dramatics and theater | 34 | 13.7 | 89 | 31.8 |
| Participant in dramatics, theater | 21 | 8.4 | 25 | 8.9 |
| Fishing | 116 | 46.6 | 68 | 24.3 |
| Flying | 9 | 3.6 | 11 | 3.9 |
| Gardening | 50 | 20.1 | 111 | 39.6 |
| Golf | 58 | 23.3 | 26 | 9.3 |
| Hiking | 57 | 22.8 | 76 | 27.1 |
| Horseback riding | 58 | 23.7 | 70 | 25.0 |
| Household arts (sewing, cooking, etc.) | 8 | 3.2 | 188 | 67.1 |
| Hunting | 142 | 57.0 | 51 | 18.2 |
| Participation in music (singing, playing an instrument, etc.) | 43 | 17.3 | 92 | 32.9 |
| Spectator, music (concerts, listening to records, etc.) | 61 | 24.5 | 124 | 44.3 |
| Participation, outdoor sports (skiing, swimming, skating, tennis) | 120 | 48.2 | 101 | 36.1 |
| Spectator, outdoor sports (football, basketball, baseball, etc.) | 143 | 57.4 | 136 | 48.6 |
| Painting, sculpture, graphic arts | 12 | 4.8 | 49 | 17.5 |
| Photography | 37 | 14.9 | 38 | 13.6 |
| Reading | 130 | 52.2 | 223 | 79.6 |
| Television | 81 | 32.5 | 122 | 43.6 |
| Travel, sight-seeing | 116 | 46.6 | 194 | 69.3 |
| Indoor collections (stamps, etc.) | 4 | 1.6 | 5 | 1.8 |
| Outdoor collections (rocks, etc.) | 12 | 4.8 | 3 | 1.1 |
| Home workshop projects | 9 | 3.6 | 0 | 0 |
| Other recreational activities not classifiable | 26 | 10.4 | 45 | 16.1 |

Because of marked differences between male and female teachers in some areas of recreational interest, it was decided to divide the teacher sample by sex and again compare their interest patterns. The results of this comparison may be found in the above table. It will be noted that the most popular recreational interests of male teachers were hunting, outdoor spectator sports, reading, participation in outdoor sports, fishing and travel. For female teachers currently employed in small rural schools the most frequently mentioned recreational activities were reading, travel, household arts, and church activities. These patterns of recreational interest are quite similar to those found in Table S10 (pages 39 and 40) for men and women in teacher programs who list the small rural school as their first job preference. The male teachers' interest patterns are also generally similar to those reported by principals in small rural schools (see Table P4, page 18).

**Table T8**

Advantages of Teaching in a Small Rural School as Reported by Teachers Who Prefer This Type of School Versus Those Who Prefer Larger Urban and Suburban Schools

| | *Prefer Small Rural School* | | *Prefer Larger City School* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Advantage* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* |
| Closer contact with students—get to know students better | 298 | 71.6 | 51 | 60 |
| Easier to make friends, feeling of belonging, feel more welcome in community | 115 | 27.6 | 15 | 17.6 |
| Have a more informal working atmosphere | 18 | 4.3 | 7 | 8.2 |
| Have smaller classes, fewer pupils to teach | 116 | 27.9 | 32 | 37.6 |
| Small community is a better place to live, and better to raise a family | 59 | 14.2 | 6 | 7.1 |
| Small school has no real advantages | 2 | .5 | 1 | 8.2 |
| Teacher can take a more active part in community | 16 | 3.8 | 2 | 2.4 |
| Teacher has greater prestige and opportunity for leadership, receives more recognition | 12 | 2.9 | 1 | 1.2 |
| Teacher has more freedom in the classroom, more chance to try new ideas, more independent | 75 | 18.0 | 16 | 18.8 |
| Low cost of living | 6 | 1.4 | 1 | 1.2 |
| Teaching offers more variety, greater range of experience, teacher works with entire program | 8 | 1.9 | 4 | 4.7 |
| Teachers participate in more extra activities | 7 | 1.7 | 0 | 0 |
| Teachers more friendly, faculty more cohesive | 47 | 11.3 | 10 | 11.8 |
| Pupils easier to work with, less pupil resistance | 32 | 7.7 | 6 | 7.1 |
| Less pressure in small school, slower pace | 16 | 3.8 | 4 | 4.7 |
| Other responses not classifiable | 67 | 16.1 | 17 | 20.0 |

In terms of the advantages of teaching in the small rural school, teachers who prefer the small rural school and those who prefer the larger school are somewhat in agreement. It will be noted that both these groups indicated the closer contact between teachers and students as the most important advantage of the small rural school. Some of the differences between these two teacher groups are quite interesting. *For example, a larger percentage of teachers who prefer the small school list as an advantage that they find it much easier to make friends and feel more welcome in the small rural community.* Twice as many of this group also state that the small community is a better place in which to live. *These data would again suggest that a very important factor, and perhaps the most important factor for teacher satisfaction in the small rural school, is the degree to which the teacher fits into, and is accepted by, the small rural community.*

**Table T9**

Disadvantages of Teaching in a Small Rural School as Reported by Teachers Who Prefer This Type of School Versus Those Who Prefer Larger Urban and Suburban Schools

| *Disadvantage* | *Prefer Small Rural School* N | % | *Prefer Larger City School* N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Financial matter, low salary, etc. | 48 | 11.6 | 9 | 10.6 |
| Lower educational standards, poorer teachers.. | 10 | 2.4 | 1 | 1.2 |
| Poor buildings and physical facilities, poor teaching aids, lack of materials, lack of personal freedom | 127 | 30.6 | 39 | 45.9 |
| Teacher can't live his own life, lack of personal freedom | 43 | 10.4 | 13 | 15.3 |
| Lack of cultural activities | 59 | 14.2 | 11 | 12.9 |
| Limited recreational facilities | 31 | 7.5 | 6 | 7.1 |
| Limited social life, few dates, little chance of marriage | 12 | 2.9 | 6 | 7.1 |
| Teacher must teach split grades, not enough pupils at any one level | 29 | 7.0 | 8 | 9.4 |
| Lack of good leadership, poor principals, poor administrators, poor school boards | 12 | 2.9 | 6 | 7.1 |
| Lack of services such as pupil personnel and counseling, etc. | 7 | 1.7 | 1 | 1.2 |
| Lack of professional stimulation | 7 | 1.7 | 2 | 2.4 |
| Too many class preparations | 52 | 12.5 | 14 | 16.5 |
| Too many out-of-school and extracurricular demands | 39 | 9.4 | 11 | 13.0 |
| Political interference with schools, small town politics, local pressure groups | 10 | 2.4 | 7 | 8.2 |
| Poor facilities for exceptional children | 11 | 2.7 | 1 | 1.2 |
| Poor or inadequate supervision | 3 | .7 | 0 | 0 |
| Limited curriculum | 37 | 8.9 | 6 | 7.1 |
| Teacher must teach courses in which he has little or no preparation | 26 | 6.3 | 8 | 9.4 |
| Parents and/or students know teacher too well | 22 | 5.3 | 4 | 4.7 |
| Small community inconveniences, poor shopping facilities, too far from medical care, etc. | 95 | 22.9 | 19 | 22.4 |
| Lack of community interest in schools | 18 | 4.3 | 6 | 7.1 |
| No significant disadvantages | 23 | 5.5 | 1 | 1.2 |
| Other responses not classifiable | 46 | 11.1 | 17 | 20.0 |

A comparison of the disadvantages of the small rural school as perceived by those who prefer the small rural school, is compared with those who prefer a larger school. This also reveals some interesting differences. It will be noted that both groups indicate poor physical facilities constitute a major disadvantage of the small rural schools. This limitation, however, was mentioned a great deal more often among those who preferred larger schools. Those who prefer the larger schools mention more frequently those disadvantages related to problems encountered in the small school situation. These are teaching split classes, having more class preparaticns, and teaching courses for which the teacher has had little preparation. As might be expected, they also mention more often disadvantages relating to the small community environment. These include the lack of personal freedom in the small community, limited social life, small town politics, and lack of community interest in the schools.

**Table T10**

Preferences and Teaching Plans of Teachers Who Teach Different Numbers of Grade Levels

| *Number of grade levels taught* | *Prefer small rural school* | | *Prefer larger school* | | *Plan to stay in small rural school* | | *Plan to move to larger school* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* |
| 1 | 147 | 86.0 | 24 | 14.0 | 144 | 84.2 | 28 | 16.4 |
| 2 | 47 | 85.5 | 8 | 14.5 | 43 | 78.2 | 12 | 21.8 |
| 3 | 37 | 78.7 | 10 | 21.3 | 27 | 57.4 | 19 | 40.4 |
| 4 | 72 | 86.7 | 11 | 13.3 | 63 | 75.9 | 20 | 24.1 |
| 5 | 40 | 76.9 | 12 | 23.1 | 35 | 67.3 | 18 | 34.6 |
| 6 | 61 | 81.3 | 14 | 18.7 | 52 | 69.3 | 24 | 32.0 |
| 7 or more | 25 | 73.5 | 9 | 26.5 | 24 | 70.6 | 9 | 26.4 |

In many small rural schools, the teacher is required to teach pupils at several grade levels. It seems possible that teachers required to teach several grade levels might be more inclined to seek positions in larger schools where teaching a large range of grades would not be required. Thus, the number of grade levels taught by the teacher was related to his preference for the small versus the larger school and his future professional plans. *There appeared to be a slight trend for teachers who taught several grade levels to be less favorably inclined towards the small rural school.*

## PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

A total of 196 principals from small rural schools in the five states responded to the Principal Questionnaire. Of this group, 165 were men, 24 were women, and 7 did not specify. Nearly 90 per cent of those responding were principals of schools having enrollments of fewer than 300 pupils. Over three-fourths of the schools of these principals were in communities of less than 1000 population, and all are in communities under 2500 population, thus fitting the usual definition for the small rural school. The small number of principals' questionnaires received, plus the variety of grade combinations, made it impossible satisfactorily to divide the principal sample into conventional subgroups such as elementary school principals vs. secondary school principals. Therefore, this was not done.

**Table P1**

Grade Levels Taught in Schools of Responding Principals

| *Grade Levels* | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| K or 1 through 6 | 60 | 30.6 |
| K or 1 through 7 | 6 | 3.1 |
| K or 1 through 8 | 36 | 18.4 |
| K or 1 through 12 | 46 | 23.5 |
| 7 through 12 | 15 | 7.7 |
| 8 through 12 | 4 | 2.0 |
| 9 through 12 | 10 | 5.1 |
| Other grade combinations | 19 | 9.7 |

It may be seen in the above table that most of the combinations of grade levels normally encountered were included in the schools of the sampled principals. It will be noted that a considerable number of these schools include both elementary and secondary grades.

**Table P2**

Population of Communities in Which Responding Principals Resided at Time They Graduated from High School

| *Population* | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| Resided on farm | 51 | 26.3 |
| Under 1000 population | 40 | 20.6 |
| 1000-2500 population | 40 | 20.6 |
| 2500-5000 population | 13 | 6.7 |
| 5000-10,000 population | 18 | 9.3 |
| 10,000-25,000 population | 11 | 5.7 |
| 25-000-50,000 population | 9 | 4.6 |
| 50,000-100,000 population | 2 | 1.0 |
| Over 100,000 population | 10 | 5.2 |

As was the case with the other questionnaires employed in this study, we obtained information on the population of the community in which each principal resided at the time he graduated from high school. This table gives the distribution of principals from different-sized communities. It will be noted that a substantial majority of these principals resided in small, rural communities at the time they graduated from high school. Over two-thirds reported having lived in communities with less than 2500 population, and only 10.8 per cent reported living in cities of 25,000 population or larger.

**Table P3**

Enrollment of High Schools from Which Respondents in the Principals' Sample Graduated

| *Enrollment** | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| Fewer than 100 | 79 | 40.9 |
| 100-149 | 39 | 20.2 |
| 150-299 | 34 | 17.6 |
| 300-699 | 28 | 14.5 |
| 700-1099 | 4 | 2.1 |
| 1100 or more | 9 | 4.7 |

*Upper three grades.

Here the table gives the enrollment distribution of high schools from which members of the principals' sample graduated. Over 60 per cent of this group graduated from high schools enrolling fewer than 50 pupils per grade. *The data in Tables P2 and P3 would suggest that a substantial majority of principals of small rural schools were reared in small, rural communities and themselves attended small, rural schools. In most states, such communities make up a rather small percentage of the total population, thus indicating a rather strong trend for persons with rural backgrounds to prefer positions in the small, rural schools.*

Many of the principal sample also earned their bachelor's degrees in small colleges. Over 60 per cent reported attending colleges of fewer than 2000 student enrollment.

## Table P4

### Recreational Interests of Principals of Small Rural Schools

| *Interest* | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| Auto tinkering and/or driving | 26 | 13.3 |
| Bowling | 26 | 13.3 |
| Church activities | 80 | 41.2 |
| Crafts such as ceramics, leather, etc. | 28 | 14.4 |
| Dancing | 26 | 13.3 |
| Spectator, dramatics and theater | 20 | 10.3 |
| Fishing | 106 | 54.4 |
| Gardening | 69 | 35.4 |
| Golf | 20 | 10.3 |
| Hiking | 36 | 18.5 |
| Horseback riding | 38 | 19.4 |
| Household arts | 19 | 9.7 |
| Hunting | 115 | 59.0 |
| Participation in music | 30 | 15.4 |
| Spectator, music | 53 | 27.1 |
| Participation, outdoor sports | 66 | 33.8 |
| Spectator, outdoor sports | 123 | 63.1 |
| Painting, sculpture, graphic arts | 16 | 8.2 |
| Photography | 37 | 19.0 |
| Reading | 116 | 59.5 |
| Television | 78 | 40.0 |
| Travel; sight-seeing | 117 | 60.0 |
| Others, not classifiable | 63 | 32.2 |

The recreational interests of the reporting principals are summarized here. The most frequently checked recreational interests for this sample were spectator-outdoor sports, travel and sightseeing, hunting, reading and fishing. The most popular interests of the principals correspond closely to those reported by teachers in Table T6. Of the five most frequently mentioned recreational interests cited above, three were checked by teachers who prefer teaching in the small rural school. It should be remembered that the principal sample was predominantly male, while the teacher sample had a larger percentage of women. *Perhaps more useful from the standpoint of prediction is the fact that male teacher education students who state a preference for teaching in the small rural school also show interest patterns similar to those reported by the principal sample.* Four out of the five interests most frequently checked by principals are also among those most frequently checked by male teacher education students.

**Table P5**

Advantages of Teaching in a Small School as Perceived by Principals of Small Rural Schools

| *Advantages* | *N* | % |
|---|---|---|
| Closer contact with students—get to know students better | 117 | 63 |
| Easier to make friends. Feeling of belonging, feel more welcome in community | 67 | 36 |
| Have smaller classes, fewer pupils to teach | 44 | 23.5 |
| Small community is a better place to live and better place to raise family | 20 | 10.7 |
| Teacher can take a more active part in community life | 4 | 2.1 |
| Teacher has greater prestige and opportunity for leadership. Receives more recognition | 7 | 3.7 |
| Teacher has more freedom in the classroom. More chance to try new ideas. More independent | 33 | 17.6 |
| Low cost of living in small rural communities | 7 | 3.7 |
| More recreational opportunities in small rural community | 3 | 1.6 |
| Teachers more friendly; faculty more cohesive | 17 | 9.0 |
| Less pupil turnover | 3 | 1.6 |
| Pupils are easier to work with, less pupil resistance | 23 | 12.3 |
| Less pressure in small school, slower pace | 4 | 2.1 |
| Others, not classifiable | 30 | 16 |

The advantages of teaching in the small rural school as perceived by the principals are summarized in this table. *It will be noted that the two advantages most frequently mentioned by this group were closer contact with students, and a feeling of belonging in the community. These were also considered important by other groups sampled in this project.*

**Table P6**

Disadvantages of Teaching in a Small School as Perceived by Principals of Small Rural Schools

| *Disadvantages* | *N* | % |
|---|---|---|
| Financial matters, low salary, etc. | 19 | 10.1 |
| Lower educational standards, poorer teachers | 11 | 5.8 |
| Poor buildings and physical facilities, poor teaching aids, lack of materials, lack of supplies, out of date equipment | 62 | 33.0 |
| Teacher can't live his own life. Lack of personal freedom | 19 | 10.1 |
| Lack of cultural activities | 18 | 10.0 |
| Limited recreational facilities | 12 | 6.3 |
| Limited social life, few dates, little chance of marriage | 8 | 4.2 |
| Teacher must teach split grades, not enough pupils at any one level | 22 | 11.6 |
| Lack of good leadership, poor principals, poor administrators, poor school boards | 5 | 2.6 |
| Lack of services such as pupil personnel, counseling, etc. | 7 | 3.7 |
| Lack of professional stimulation | 3 | 1.6 |
| Too many class preparations | 13 | 6.9 |
| Too many out-of-school and extra-curricular demands | 8 | 4.2 |
| Poor facilities for exceptional children | 5 | 2.6 |
| Poor or inadequate supervision | 3 | 1.6 |
| Limited curriculum | 15 | 7.9 |
| Teacher must teach courses in which he has little or no preparation | 12 | 6.3 |
| Parents and/or students know teacher too well | 6 | 3.1 |
| Small community inconveniences, poor shopping facilities, too far from medical care, etc. | 45 | 23.8 |
| Lack of community interest in schools | 8 | 4.2 |
| No significant disadvantages | 18 | 9.5 |
| Others, not classifiable | 27 | 14.3 |

Table P6 summarizes the disadvantages of teaching in the small rural school as perceived by the principals' sample. *The principals consider poor physical facilities to be one of the outstanding disadvantages of the small rural school.* It is interesting to note that the next most frequently mentioned disadvantage was the inconvenience that one encounters in most small rural communities. It seems surprising that this group would be sensitive to these inconveniences in view of the fact that a great many of them were reared in small communities that were probably not much different from their present place of residence.

**Table P7**

Weaknesses in the Preparation of Newly Trained Teachers as Perceived by Principals of Small Rural Schools

| *Weaknesses* | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| Can't discipline pupils | 70 | 36.3 |
| Adapting work to pupil differences | 93 | 49.2 |
| Use poor grammar | 18 | 9.3 |
| Can't teach outside of major field | 32 | 16.6 |
| Don't understand students | 31 | 16.0 |
| Can't adjust to limited facilities | 53 | 27.5 |
| Generally weak in subject matter | 20 | 10.4 |
| Can't teach split grades | 46 | 23.8 |
| Won't accept responsibility | 34 | 17.6 |
| Too theoretical | 27 | 14.0 |
| Lack self-confidence | 23 | 11.9 |
| Can't hold interest of children | 15 | 7.8 |
| Need more psychology | 8 | 4.1 |
| Can't handle problem children | 26 | 13.5 |
| Weak in specific subject(s) | 6 | 3.1 |
| Others | 6 | 3.1 |

Principals were also asked what they considered to be the most common weaknesses of teachers whom they had observed in the small school. *It will be noted that the most frequently checked weaknesses are in adapting work to pupil differences, pupil discipline and adjustment to the limited facilities frequently found in the small rural school.* It is interesting to note that these weaknesses do not correspond closely with those reported by teachers in response to a similar question (see Table T4, p. 10). If the current teacher training programs do have specific weaknesses with regard to preparation for teaching in a small rural school, it seems likely that an extensive observational and interview approach would be necessary to define these areas validly.

**Table P8**

Factors Leading to the Decisions of Principals Sampled to Accept Their First Teaching Position in a Small Rural School

| *Factors* | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| Experience as a student in small schools | 18 | 9.1 |
| Only job available | 21 | 10.7 |
| Husband (wife) lived there | 4 | 2.0 |
| Chance for administrative experience | 26 | 13.2 |
| Wanted job near home | 20 | 10.2 |
| Best salary offered | 18 | 9.1 |
| Like freedom of small school | 19 | 9.6 |
| Prefer small communities | 43 | 21.8 |
| Outside interests, such as farming | 6 | 3.0 |
| Better place to raise a family | 22 | 11.2 |
| Others, not classifiable | 19 | 9.6 |

Principals were asked to identify what they considered to be the most important factor leading to their acceptance of their first teaching positions in small rural schools. The most frequent response by a considerable margin was preference for small communities. The next most frequent was the chance for administrative experience, and third, the feeling that the small community is a better place to raise a family. *It is interesting to note that preference for the small community was also the most frequently given reason by teachers who prefer the small rural school.*

**Table P9**

Factors Leading Teachers to Continue Teaching in Small Rural Schools as Perceived by Principal Sample

| *Factors* | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| Low cost of living | 12 | 6.7 |
| Likes small *town* atmosphere, good place to raise family | 37 | 20.6 |
| Is accepted as leader in community, is important in community | 35 | 19.4 |
| Likes outdoor living and recreation | 32 | 17.8 |
| Family comes from this area, has many ties | 81 | 45.0 |
| Likes absence of pressure in small community | 9 | 5 0 |
| Likes small *school* atmosphere, friendly faculty, informality | 12 | 6.7 |
| Small schools offer better professional opportunities | 8 | 4.4 |
| Likes fewer students, smaller teaching load | 12 | 6.7 |
| Likes freedom in a small school. Can teach as he wishes | 13 | 7.2 |
| Likes close contact with pupils | 18 | 10.0 |
| Others, not classifiable | 37 | 20.6 |

Each principal was also asked to think of a teacher currently employed in his school whom he considered well adjusted to the school situation and whom he believed would continue to teach in a small rural school. He was then asked to identify factors in the school and community which he felt were attractive to this person. By far the most frequently mentioned response given by principals was related to the family ties they felt such teachers had in the local community. Other factors listed with some frequency included acceptance of the individual as a leader in the community, liking for the small town as a place to live, and liking for the outdoor recreation available in the small community. All four of these most frequently mentioned factors involve the community rather than the school itself. *These data tend to support the evidence found on the teacher questionnaire that a liking for the small town environment and ability to adjust to that environment is an important requirement teachers in small rural schools indicated.*

**Table P10**

Factors Leading Teachers to Leave Teaching Positions in Small Rural Schools as Perceived by the Principals' Sample

| *Factors* | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| Lack of professional opportunity | 41 | 23.2 |
| Disliked extra demands on time, extracurricular activities | 6 | 3.4 |
| Could not adjust to small school limitations | 28 | 15.8 |
| Preferred recreational activities not available | 33 | 18.6 |
| Lack of cultural activities, too isolated | 29 | 16.4 |
| No chance for dating—limited social life | 19 | 10.7 |
| Felt rejected by community | 10 | 5.6 |
| Dislikes small town life—could not adjust to small community | 45 | 25.4 |
| Disliked inconveniences in small town | 16 | 9.0 |
| Others, not classifiable | 49 | 27.7 |

Principals were also asked to think of teachers who had left their school to teach in a larger community and identify factors that appeared to contribute to their decision to leave the small school situation. It will be noted that the most frequently mentioned specific factors were inability to adjust to the small community, and lack of professional opportunity in the small rural school. Other factors frequently mentioned included lack of preferred recreational activities, lack of cultural activities in the small community, and inability to adjust to small school limitations.

## FACULTY QUESTIONNAIRE

The faculty questionnaire was returned by 272 faculty members from colleges and departments of education in the five states. Of those, 184 were men, 53 were women, and 15 failed to specify. The vast majority of respondents, 170, held a doctor's degree. Of the remainder, 39 indicated MA's as the highest they had completed; 26 the bachelor's degree; and 19 failed to respond to the question. College teaching experience ranged from one year to more than 20 years, with the median between eight and nine years.

**Table F1**

Population of Communities in Which Faculty Members Resided at Time of High School Graduation

| *Population* | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| Farm | 33 | 13.0 |
| Under 1000 | 33 | 13.0 |
| 1000-2500 | 23 | 9.1 |
| 2500-5000 | 35 | 13.8 |
| 5000-10,000 | 28 | 11.0 |
| 10,000-25,000 | 26 | 10.2 |
| 25,000-50,000 | 16 | 6.3 |
| 50,000-100,000 | 12 | 4.7 |
| Over 100,000 | 39 | 15.4 |

Among the descriptive data collected on this sample was information on the population of the community in which the individual resided at the time of his graduation from high school. It is interesting to note that over 35 per cent of the respondents had resided in communities having a population of 2500 or fewer. Another 14 per cent resided in communities having populations between 2500 and 5000. *Thus, about half of the faculty sample came from rural communities and small towns.*

**Table F2**

Enrollment of High Schools from Which Responding Faculty Members Graduated*

| *Enrollment* | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| Less than 100 | 63 | 25.7 |
| 100-149 | 29 | 11.8 |
| 150-299 | 43 | 17.6 |
| 300-699 | 50 | 25.4 |
| 100-1099 | 18 | 7.4 |
| 1100 or more | 42 | 17.2 |

*Enrollment of top three grades was obtained so that figures would be comparable for all respondents.

In order to appraise further the extent of the individual's experience in a small school environment, the respondents were asked the approximate enrollment of the top three grades of their high school at the time they graduated. It will be noted that 37.5 per cent of the respondents estimated enrollment of the top three

grades of their high school at fewer than 150 at the time they graduated, thus fitting one criterion for a small secondary school, i.e., fewer than 50 pupils per grade.

It will be noted that an additional 17.6 per cent graduated from high schools having a total enrollment of fewer than 300 pupils. The data presented in Tables F1 and F2 indicate that a substantial proportion of the faculty members sampled have resided in small rural communities and have had direct experience as pupils in small rural schools.

**Table F3**

Amount of Experience of Faculty Members in Small Rural Schools

| | *Numbers of Faculty Members Having Experience*[2] | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Type of School* | *1-3 yrs.* | *4-6 yrs.* | *7-9 yrs.* | *10 years or more* |
| Small rural elementary schools[1] | 51 | 20 | 11 | 4 |
| Small rural secondary schools[1] | 43 | 16 | 10 | 7 |
| Elementary schools in community 2500-25,000 | 32 | 14 | 8 | 7 |
| Secondary schools in community 2500-25,000 | 38 | 22 | 9 | 10 |
| Elementary schools in cities over 25,000 | 8 | 9 | 4 | 12 |
| Secondary schools in cities over 25,000 | 33 | 9 | 6 | 6 |

[1]In community of 2500 population or less, having fewer than 50 pupils per grade.

[2]Some faculty members had experience in several types of schools; thus, total does not equal total number of respondents.

With respect to teaching or administrative experience in small rural schools, we find that of the 254 respondents, 162 have had such experience. Table F3 gives the number of faculty members listing different amounts of experience in elementary and secondary schools in different sized communities.

**Table F4**

Year of Most Recent Experience of Responding Faculty Members as a Teacher or Principal in a Small Rural School

| *Year* | *N* | *%* |
|---|---|---|
| 1964 | 0 | 0 |
| 1963 | 3 | 1.3 |
| 1962 | 2 | .9 |
| 1961 | 1 | .4 |
| 1960 | 3 | 1.3 |
| 1959 | 5 | 2.2 |
| 1958 | 3 | 1.3 |
| 1957 | 3 | 1.3 |
| 1956 | 6 | 2.6 |
| 1955 | 7 | 3.2 |
| 1954 | 3 | 1.3 |
| 1953 | 3 | 1.3 |
| 1952 | 3 | 1.3 |
| 1951 | 11 | 4.8 |
| 1950 | 5 | 2.2 |
| 1949 | 4 | .4 |
| 1948 | 5 | 2.2 |
| 1947 | 0 | 0 |
| 1946 | 3 | 1.3 |
| 1945 | 3 | 1.3 |
| 1944 and earlier | 62 | 27.1 |
| Never | 105 | 45.8 |

Although Tables F1, F2, and F3 indicate a considerable amount of experience related to the small school and small community among the faculty respondents, the recency of such experience is also important. The questionnaire asked the respondent to indicate the year in which he last worked in a small school. The table summarizes the responses to this item. It will be noted that only about 6 per cent of the respondents have held such positions in the five years preceding the survey. Only 16 per cent held a position of teacher or principal in a small rural school since 1954. *It will be noted also that more than two-thirds of the 250 faculty members who responded to this item either had no experience in small rural schools or had no such experience within the past 20 years. These data would suggest that unless the faculty member has made an active effort to establish and maintain contact with small rural schools, he may well have little direct knowledge of what is occurring in these schools today.*

**Table F5**

Small School Opportunities as Viewed by Faculty Members Having Versus Not Having Small School Experience

| *Does the small rural school offer opportunities comparable to the larger urban or suburban school in terms of:* | *Those having small school experience* | | | | *Those not having small school experience* | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Yes* | | *No* | | *Yes* | | *No* | |
| | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* |
| Advancement to administrative positions | 73 | 55.3 | 63 | 48.1 | 54 | 52.9 | 40 | 39.6 |
| Professional status in the state? | 34 | 25.8 | 100 | 76.3 | 23 | 22.8 | 70 | 69.3 |
| Development into a superior teacher? | 89 | 67.9 | 44 | 33.3 | 62 | 61.4 | 28 | 27.7 |

The Faculty Questionnaire also asked the respondent whether he felt the small rural school offered opportunities comparable to larger urban or suburban schools in terms of advancement to administrative positions, to professional status in the state, and to development into a superior teacher. The data for faculty members who reported small school experience and those who did not report such experience are presented separately. Among the respondents in both groups, however, a majority felt that in terms of advancement to administrative positions and development into a superior teacher, the opportunities in the small and large school were comparable. A rather large majority of both groups, however, felt that the small school did not provide comparable opportunities in terms of professional status.

**Table F6**

Advantages of Teaching in a Small School as Perceived by Faculty Members Having and Not Having Small School Experience

| | *With small school exp.* | | *Without small school exp.* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Advantages* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* |
| Closer contact with students—get to know students better | 86 | 64.7 | 61 | 54.5 |
| Easier to make friends. Feeling of belonging. Feel more welcome in community | 48 | 36.1 | 29 | 26.1 |
| Have a more informal working atmosphere | 8 | 6.0 | 0 | 0 |
| Have smaller classes, fewer pupils to teach | 26 | 19.5 | 17 | 13.3 |
| Small community is a better place to live and better place to raise family | 13 | 9.8 | 8 | 7.2 |
| Small school has no real advantages | 5 | 3.6 | 7 | 6.3 |
| Teacher can take a more active part in community life | 21 | 15.8 | 13 | 11.7 |
| Teacher has greater prestige and opportunity for leadership. Receives more recognition | 23 | 17.3 | 9 | 8.0 |
| Teacher has more freedom in the classroom. More chance to try new ideas. More independent | 38 | 28.6 | 15 | 13.4 |
| Teaching offers more variety; a greater range of experiences. Teacher works with entire program | 26 | 19.5 | 10 | 9.0 |
| Teachers more friendly; faculty more cohesive | 21 | 15.8 | 17 | 15.3 |
| Pupils are easier to work with, less pupil resistance | 5 | 3.8 | 4 | 3.6 |
| Less pressure in small school, slower pace | 7 | 5.3 | 10 | 9.0 |
| Other responses not classifiable | 31 | 23.3 | 31 | 27.7 |

Faculty members also were asked to list what they considered the principal advantages and disadvantages of teaching in a small rural school. These items were constructed in free response form rather than multiple choice, so as to avoid leading the respondent. Their responses were studied, a code was developed, and the frequency of each response was obtained.

It will be noted that the faculty sample again has been divided into those having teaching or administrative experience in small rural schools and those not having such experience. The percentages given in this table represent the proportion of each of these two groups that listed each particular advantage. Most respondents listed more than one advantage or disadvantage.

*For both groups, the advantage that was listed by the greatest percentage was that the small school permits the teacher to get to know his students better. This was expressed in a number of ways by respondents, but the basic idea that the small school permits closer contact with students was contained in all responses in this category. The second most frequently mentioned advantage was also the same for both groups. This advantage referred primarily to the community atmosphere. The respondents indicated that teachers working in small rural schools developed more of a feeling of belonging and identification with the community.* They felt more welcome in the community and found it easier to make friends.

Faculty members with experience in small schools tended to mention certain advantages much more frequently than their colleagues who did not have such experience. For example, 28 per cent of the former group listed the freedom and independence that the teacher has in the small school, while only 13 per cent of the latter group listed this advantage. Nearly 20 per cent of the faculty members having small school experience indicated as an advantage for the small schools the greater variety and the greater range of experience that the teacher encounters. Only 9 per cent of the faculty members without small school experience listed this advantage.

**Table F7**

Disadvantages of Teaching in a Small School as Perceived by Faculty Members Having and Not Having Small School Experience

| | *With small school exp.* | | *Without small school exp.* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *Disadvantages* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* |
| Financial matters, low salary, etc. | 23 | 17.2 | 15 | 13.4 |
| Lower educational standards, poorer teachers | 10 | 7.5 | 3 | 2.7 |
| Poor buildings and physical facilities, poor teaching aids, lack of materials, lack of supplies, out of date equipment | 79 | 59.0 | 62 | 55.4 |
| Teacher can't live his own life. Lack personal freedom | 26 | 19.4 | 16 | 14.4 |
| Lack of cultural activities | 37 | 27.6 | 22 | 19.8 |
| Limited recreational facilities | 2 | 1.5 | 3 | 2.7 |
| Limited social life, few dates, little chance of marriage | 6 | 4.6 | 5 | 4.5 |
| Teacher must teach split grades, not enough pupils at any one level | 10 | 7.5 | 6 | 5.4 |
| Lack of good leadership, poor principals, poor administrators, poor school boards | 18 | 13.4 | 12 | 10.8 |
| Lack of services such as pupil personnel, counseling, etc. | 14 | 10.5 | 2 | 1.8 |
| Lack of professional stimulation | 14 | 10.5 | 15 | 13.5 |
| Too many class preparations | 10 | 7.5 | 7 | 6.3 |
| Too many out-of-school and extra-curricular demands | 5 | 3.8 | 2 | 1.8 |
| Political interference with schools, small town politics, local pressure groups | 12 | 9.0 | 8 | 7.2 |
| Poor facilities for exceptional children | 5 | 3.8 | 1 | .9 |
| Poor or inadequate supervision | 20 | 14.9 | 10 | 9.0 |
| Limited curriculum | 13 | 9.7 | 6 | 5.4 |
| Teacher must teach courses in which he has little or no preparation | 5 | 3.8 | 12 | 10.8 |
| Parents and/or students know teacher too well | 4 | 3.0 | 3 | 2.7 |
| Small community inconveniences, poor shopping facilities, too far from medical care, etc. | 15 | 11.3 | 15 | 13.5 |
| Lack of community interest in schools | 3 | 2.3 | 2 | 1.8 |
| No significant disadvantages | 3 | 2.3 | 2 | 1.8 |
| Other responses not classifiable | 19 | 14.3 | 25 | 22.5 |

*The most frequently listed disadvantage, poor physical facilities, is the same for both of these two groups. The groups also agreed on the second most frequent disadvantage, the lack of cultural activities.* It will be noted that the group differed rather markedly on the frequency with which some of the disadvantages were listed. For example, a somewhat larger percentage of faculty members with small school experience listed lack of supporting services than did the group without small school experience. In contrast, the

faculty members without small school experience more frequently listed as a disadvantage the necessity of teaching courses for which the teacher has had little or no preparation.

All in all, the faculty members having small school experience seemed to list slightly more advantages as well as disadvantages, with the difference greater for the advantages. *These differences would suggest that the faculty member who has had experience in the small school would tend to be more favorable towards this type of school, and this more favorable perception might have an influence upon his students.* The average number of advantages listed by faculty members with small school experience was 2.6, while those without small school experience was 2.1. In the case of disadvantages, the average for faculty members with small school experience was 2.6, while the average for faculty members without any small school experience was 2.5.

## STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

The student questionnaire data are based on a sample of 268 students in elementary teacher preparation programs, and 361 students in secondary preparation programs. The questionnaire includes nine alternate choice items and two essay or unstructured-response items. Two of the items on the student questionnaire described teaching positions and asked the students to read these descriptions and to indicate which would be his first, second and third choices. One of these items was answered by students planning to teach in elementary school and the other by those planning to teach in secondary schools.

### Table S1

Job Preferences of Secondary Teacher Training Students by State

| | *Choice status of small rural school teaching position* | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *1st choice* | | *2nd choice* | | *3rd choice* | | *Total* |
| *State* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* |
| Arizona | 24 | 21.4 | 36 | 32.1 | 52 | 46.5 | 112 |
| Colorado | 13 | 14.1 | 32 | 34.8 | 47 | 51.1 | 92 |
| Nevada | 9 | 12.3 | 25 | 34.2 | 39 | 53.4 | 73 |
| Utah | 4 | 6.1 | 17 | 25.8 | 45 | 68.2 | 66 |
| New Mexico* | 2 | 13.3 | 10 | 66.7 | 3 | 20.0 | 15 |
| Totals | 52 | | 120 | | 186 | | 358 |

*Too few cases were obtained from New Mexico to draw any meaningful conclusions.

Some rather marked differences in the percentages of students listing the small rural school as first choice may be noted in this table. In Arizona, more than one fifth of the responding teacher training students checked the job description fitting the small rural school as their first choice. In contrast, only about one student in eight from Colorado and Nevada listed the small rural secondary school as his first choice. The data from Utah are even more extreme, in that only about one out of 16 of the responding students preparing for secondary teaching listed the small rural school as his first choice. *These data are based on rather small samples and thus may be regarded as suggestive only.* It would be in order to do an additional, broader-sample study of job preference of teacher education students. *If the results found in this table occur when larger samples are studied, it would seem appropriate to attempt to determine why teaching positions in small rural secondary schools are approximately four times as attractive in Arizona as in Utah.*

Another point worth noting, in reviewing Table S1, is that in no state was the small rural secondary school teaching position the first choice of as many as one-fourth of the respondents. In all states except Arizona more than half of the students responding listed the small rural school as their last choice.

## Table S2

Job Preferences of Elementary Teacher Training Students by State

| | *Choice status of small rural school teaching position* | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *1st choice* | | *2nd choice* | | *3rd choice* | | *Total* |
| *State* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* |
| Arizona | 14 | 23.7 | 22 | 37.3 | 23 | 39.0 | 59 |
| Colorado | 7 | 22.6 | 7 | 22.6 | 17 | 54.8 | 31 |
| Nevada | 24 | 32.4 | 25 | 33.8 | 25 | 33.8 | 74 |
| Utah | 24 | 28.9 | 19 | 22.9 | 40 | 48.2 | 83 |
| New Mexico | 3 | 14.3 | 11 | 52.4 | 7 | 33.3 | 21 |
| Totals | 72 | | 84 | | 112 | | 268 |

In general, the job preferences of elementary teacher training students are somewhat more favorable to the small rural school. The small rural school is still the last choice for over 41 per cent of the students surveyed. It is the first choice for nearly a third of the Nevada students and approximately a fourth of those from Arizona, Colorado and Utah.

## Table S3

Job Preferences of Secondary Teacher Training Students of Different Marital Status

| | *Choice status of small rural school teaching position* | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *1st choice* | | *2nd choice* | | *3rd choice* | | *Total* |
| *Group* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* |
| Married Men | 18 | 20.0 | 35 | 39.9 | 37 | 41.1 | 90 |
| Single Men | 17 | 12.9 | 46 | 34.8 | 69 | 52.3 | 132 |
| Separated Men | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Married Women | 3 | 10.3 | 10 | 34.5 | 17 | 55.2 | 30 |
| Single Women | 10 | 10.3 | 24 | 24.7 | 63 | 64.9 | 97 |
| Widows | 2 | | 1 | | 0 | | 3 |
| Separated Women | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 3 |
| Combined Groups | 52 | 14.6 | 117 | 32.9 | 187 | 52.5 | 356 |

Table S3 is also concerned with the job preferences of secondary teacher training students. But in this table the states have been combined and the preferences of students having different marital status are compared. The purpose of these comparisons was to test the hypothesis that the small rural school is more attractive to married men and women than to single men and women because of the limited opportunities for social life and for selecting a suitable mate. *The data indicate that the small rural secondary school is the first choice of relatively few teacher training students of either marital status. As was expected, the married men listed the small rural secondary teaching position as first choice more than any other marital status group.* Both married and single women tend to reject such teaching positions, with about 10 per cent listing the small rural school as their first choice and over 50 per cent listing it as their third choice.

*It will be noted that of the entire secondary teacher education student sample, 14.6 per cent selected the small rural secondary school as their first job preference.*

**Table S4**

Job Preferences of Elementary Teacher Training Students of Different Marital Status

| | *Choice status of small rural school teaching position* | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *1st choice* | | *2nd choice* | | *3rd choice* | | *Total* |
| *Group* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* |
| Married Men | 10 | 32.3 | 8 | 25.8 | 13 | 41.9 | 31 |
| Single Men | 8 | 32.0 | 7 | 28.0 | 10 | 40.0 | 25 |
| Separated Men | 1 | | | | | | 1 |
| Married Women | 15 | 22.0 | 23 | 33.8 | 30 | 44.2 | 68 |
| Single Women | 36 | 27.5 | 40 | 30.5 | 55 | 42.0 | 131 |
| Widows | 2 | | | | 1 | | 3 |
| Separated Women | 1 | | 2 | | 1 | | 4 |
| Combined Groups | 73 | 27.8 | 80 | 30.4 | 110 | 41.8 | 263 |

Again, we find that married men list the small rural school as first choice more frequently than other groups, with single men second. *A higher percentage of single women listed the small rural school as first choice than did married women.* A comparison of the first choice of all groups combined shows that 27.8 per cent of these respondents indicated the small rural school as their first job preference. This is considerably higher than the 14.6 per cent reported for secondary education students.

**Table S5**

Job Preferences of Teacher Training Students from Different-sized Communities

*Secondary*

| | *Choice status of small rural school teaching position* | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *1st choice* | | *2nd choice* | | *3rd choice* | | *Total* |
| *Group* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* | *%* | *N* |
| Under 2500 population ..... | 16 | 17.8 | 41 | 45.6 | 33 | 36.6 | 90 |
| 2500-25,000 population ..... | 23 | 18.7 | 41 | 33.3 | 59 | 48.1 | 123 |
| Over 25,000 population ..... | 13 | 9.1 | 34 | 23.9 | 95 | 67.0 | 142 |
| *Elementary* | | | | | | | |
| Under 2500 population ..... | 15 | 30.6 | 23 | 46.9 | 11 | 22.5 | 49 |
| 2500-25,000 population ..... | 29 | 27.7 | 35 | 33.3 | 41 | 39.0 | 105 |
| Over 25,000 population..... | 28 | 25.0 | 26 | 23.2 | 58 | 51.8 | 112 |

It was hypothesized that the job preference of teacher education students would be influenced to some degree by their background and familiarity with small rural communities. Thus, elementary and secondary teacher education students were divided into three groups. The first group was made up of students who were residing in communities of less than 2500 at the time they graduated from high school; the second group were students coming from towns and cities 2,500 to 25,000 population, and the third group from cities over 25,000 population. Students from each of the three sizes of community were then compared on the percentage who indicated a small rural teaching position to be their first choice, their second choice, and their third choice. These comparisons may be found in the above table. For the secondary sample, somewhat larger percentages of students from small and medium-sized communities than from large communities list the small rural teaching position as their first choice, and somewhat fewer list it as their third choice. *Generally, the patterns for secondary teacher training students indicate that the student's experience in small rural communities tends to make him somewhat more favorable towards teaching positions in such communities.*

A similar, though less pronounced, pattern emerged in comparing the choice of teacher training students planning to teach at the elementary school level. Here again, a greater percentage of students from small rural communities listed the small rural elementary school position as their first choice and a smaller per cent as their third choice.

It was also speculated that teacher training students who had had some experience as pupils in a small rural school would be more favorably disposed towards teaching in such schools than students not having such experience. To test this hypothesis, students who graduated from different sized high schools were compared in terms of their preference for teaching in a small rural school. The results showed a slight trend in the hypothesized direction.

**Table S6**

**Family Stability During Public School Years and Preference for Small School Teaching Positions**

| Group | Small school 1st choice | | Small school 2nd choice | | Small school 3rd choice | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N |
| *Secondary* | | | | | | | |
| Highly stable | 34 | 15.9 | 75 | 35.0 | 105 | 49.5 | 214 |
| Moderately stable | 9 | 9.7 | 26 | 28.0 | 58 | 62.3 | 93 |
| Transient | 8 | 17.8 | 15 | 33.3 | 22 | 48.9 | 45 |
| *Elementary* | | | | | | | |
| Highly stable | 43 | 26.9 | 52 | 32.5 | 65 | 40.6 | 160 |
| Moderately stable | 13 | 20.3 | 21 | 32.8 | 30 | 46.9 | 64 |
| Transient | 15 | 39.5 | 10 | 26.3 | 16 | 42.2 | 41 |

Some psychologists have suggested that individuals having an unstable or transient environment during childhood tend to prefer jobs offering stability when they become adults. One of the items on the Student Questionnaire asked the student to indicate the number of elementary and secondary schools he had attended during his public school education. Students were divided into highly stable, moderately stable, and transient on the basis of their responses. Each of these groups was then compared in terms of his preference for a small rural school teaching position, which is often considered to offer the individual more stability than a position in a large city school. It may be seen that there was some trend among secondary teacher training students who had experienced several moves during their public school education more frequently to select a small rural school as their first choice and less frequently as their third choice. This pattern was also present among elementary teacher training students.

It is interesting to note that for both elementary and secondary teacher education students, the moderately stable group had the smallest percentage indicating a small rural position as their first teaching choice. It may be that the highly stable group came from smaller communities and their preference would thus indicate a familiarity with the small school environment, while the transient group may tend to select the small rural school environment because of their need for security. It appears that further work in this area, using larger samples which would permit more sophisticated analysis procedures, would be desirable.

**Table S7**

Advantages of Teaching in a Small Rural School as Perceived by Students Who Prefer and Do Not Prefer to Teach in a Small Rural School

| *Advantages* | *Students who prefer small school position (N=124)* N | % | *Students not preferring small school (N=497)* N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Closer contact with students—get to know students better | 67 | 54.0 | 320 | 64.4 |
| Easier to make friends. Feeling of belonging, feel more welcome in community | 5 | 4.0 | 38 | 7.6 |
| Have a more informal working atmosphere | 2 | 1.6 | 1 | .2 |
| Have smaller classes, fewer pupils to teach | 16 | 12.9 | 102 | 20.5 |
| Small community is a better place to live and better place to raise family | 2 | 1.6 | 9 | 1.8 |
| Small school has no real advantages | 2 | 1.6 | 26 | 5.2 |
| Teacher can take a more active part in community life | 0 | 0 | 14 | 2.8 |
| Teacher has greater prestige and opportunity for leadership. Receives more recognition | 0 | 0 | 3 | .6 |
| Teacher has more freedom in the classroom. More chance to try new ideas. More independent | 4 | 3.2 | 17 | 3.4 |
| Teaching offers more variety; a greater range of experiences. Teacher works with entire program | 1 | .8 | 8 | 1.6 |
| Teachers more friendly; faculty more cohesive | 3 | 2.4 | 8 | 1.6 |
| Pupils are easier to work with, less pupil resistance | 2 | 1.6 | 6 | 1.2 |
| Less pressure in small school, slower pace | 4 | 3.2 | 2 | .4 |
| Other response not classifiable | 6 | 4.8 | 22 | 4.4 |

Two of the items in the Student Questionnaire requested the teacher education students to indicate what they considered to be the major advantage and major disadvantage of teaching in a small rural school. Students who listed a small rural school as their first teaching choice were compared on their responses to these items with students who did not prefer the small school.

In looking over the table it may be seen that the percentage of the students in the two groups who listed specific advantages is closely comparable in many of the categories. *By far the most frequently mentioned advantage for both groups was the closer contact that is possible between teacher and pupil in the small rural school. A sizable percentage of both groups also considered the smaller classes that are found in most rural schools to be an important advantage.*

**Table S8**

Disadvantages of Teaching in a Small Rural School as Perceived by Different Groups

| *Disadvantages* | *Students who prefer small school position (N=124)* N | % | *Students not preferring small school (N=497)* N | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Financial matters, low salary, etc. | 5 | 4.0 | 24 | 4.8 |
| Lower educational standards, poorer teachers | 0 | 0 | 4 | .8 |
| Poor buildings and physical facilities, poor teaching aids, lack of materials, lack of supplies, out of date equipment | 51 | 41.0 | 259 | 52.1 |
| Teacher can't live his own life. Lack of personal freedom | 8 | 6.5 | 38 | 7.7 |
| Lack of cultural activities | 12 | 9.7 | 34 | 6.8 |
| Limited recreational facilities | 1 | .8 | 16 | 3.2 |
| Limited social life, few dates, little chance of marriage | 2 | 1.6 | 1 | 1.6 |
| Teacher must teach split grades, not enough pupils at any one level | 2 | 1.6 | 17 | 3.4 |
| Lack of professional stimulation | 1 | .8 | 16 | 3.2 |
| Too many class preparations | 1 | .8 | 9 | 1.8 |
| Too many out-of-school and extra-curricular demands | 1 | .8 | 3 | .6 |
| Political interference with schools, small town politics, local pressure groups | 1 | .8 | 3 | .6 |
| Poor or inadequate supervision | 0 | 0 | 4 | .8 |
| Limited curriculum | 6 | 4.8 | 43 | 8.7 |
| Teacher must teach courses in which he has little or no preparation | 1 | .8 | 7 | 1.4 |
| Parents and/or students know teacher too well | 4 | 3.2 | 11 | 2.2 |
| Small community inconveniences, poor shopping facilities, too far from medical care, etc. | 5 | 5.0 | 24 | 4.7 |
| Lack of community interest in schools | 2 | 2.0 | 6 | 1.2 |
| No significant disadvantages | 3 | 3.0 | 15 | 2.8 |
| Other responses not classifiable | 8 | 7.0 | 21 | 3.4 |

Close agreement is also evident in comparisons between the percentages of teacher education students in the two groups who listed disadvantages of teaching in a small rural school. It will be noted in this table that, by far, the most frequently mentioned disadvantage relates to poor physical facilities. Among those who prefer the small rural school, lack of cultural activities is the second most frequently mentioned disadvantage. Among those not preferring the small rural school, the limited curriculum found in many small schools is perceived as the second most important disadvantage. All in all, however, there is surprising similarity in the response patterns in these two groups in their perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of the small rural school.

*The data given in Tables S7 and S8 should be of value to administrators in small rural schools as a basis for evaluating their schools and also as an aid in working with community leaders and in interviewing prospective teachers. The small rural school that can offer some of the more significant advantages listed in Table S7 and, at the same time, be free of some of the more serious disadvantages listed in Table S8, should be in a strong position to recruit better teachers.*

**Table S9**

Job Preferences of Teacher Training Students as Compared with Their Preferred Recreational Activities

| | *First Preference* | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Small rural school* | | *School in small city* | | *School in large city* | |
| | *Men* | *Women* | *Men* | *Women* | *Men* | *Women* |
| *Recreational Activities* | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| That can be carried out easier in small rural community | 54.9 | 34.3 | 48.9 | 32.2 | 34.9 | 25.9 |
| That can be carried out better in a city | 29.9 | 45.1 | 35.0 | 42.4 | 38.5 | 38.7 |

It was hypothesized that the recreational interests of these students would be related to whether they preferred a position in a small rural school or a larger city school. In order to test this hypothesis, the recreational preferences of each student were classified into three categories: (1) those that can be carried out more easily in a small rural community; (2) those that can be carried out more easily in a large city; and (3) those that can be carried out as easily in one place as another. Men and women who indicated different teaching position preferences were then compared as to the recreational activities they preferred. For men, a clear and definite trend is apparent. Those men who prefer the small rural school also prefer the recreational activities more easily carried out in a small rural community and least prefer those activities more easily carried out in a large city.

The data for women are somewhat less clear cut, as there appears to be a tendency for women who prefer a small rural school to check more frequently recreational activities of all types. This would suggest that the small rural school environment has considerably more appeal than does the city for the active, recreation-minded woman.

*There seems little doubt from the data presented in this table that recreational preferences have a marked relationship to teaching position preferences.*

## Table S10

### Recreational Interests of Secondary Teacher Education Students Who Prefer Teaching Positions in Different-Sized Communities

| Recreational Interest | Large City School | | | | School in Small City | | | | Small Rural School | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Men (N=78) | | Women (N=70) | | Men (N=104) | | Women (N=63) | | Men (N=38) | | Women (N=24) | |
| | N* | % † | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Auto tinkering and or driving | 20 | 25.6 | 5 | 7.1 | 40 | 38.5 | 2 | 3.2 | 17 | 44.7 | 1 | 4.2 |
| Bowling | 33 | 42.3 | 26 | 37.1 | 48 | 46.2 | 27 | 42.8 | 15 | 39.7 | 12 | 50.0 |
| Church activities | 18 | 23.1 | 25 | 35.7 | 17 | 16.3 | 26 | 42.9 | 9 | 23.7 | 9 | 37.5 |
| Crafts such as ceramics, leather, etc. | 14 | 17.9 | 13 | 18.6 | 10 | 9.6 | 5 | 7.9 | 7 | 18.4 | 8 | 33.3 |
| Dancing | 29 | 37.2 | 41 | 58.6 | 27 | 26.0 | 38 | 60.3 | 8 | 21.1 | 15 | 62.5 |
| Spectator, dramatics, theater | 25 | 32.1 | 38 | 54.3 | 15 | 14.4 | 36 | 57.1 | 10 | 26.3 | 14 | 58.3 |
| Participant in dramatics and theater | 11 | 14.1 | 8 | 11.4 | 6 | 5.8 | 7 | 11.1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 4.2 |
| Fishing | 35 | 44.9 | 12 | 17.2 | 61 | 57.0 | 5 | 7.9 | 24 | 63.2 | 3 | 12.5 |
| Flying | 7 | 9.0 | 2 | 2.9 | 6 | 5.8 | 6 | 9.5 | 6 | 15.8 | 0 | 0 |
| Gardening | 10 | 12.8 | 4 | 5.7 | 8 | 7.7 | 16 | 25.4 | 4 | 10.5 | 6 | 25.0 |
| Golf | 23 | 29.5 | 7 | 12.9 | 33 | 31.7 | 6 | 9.5 | 7 | 18.4 | 4 | 16.7 |
| Hiking | 20 | 25.6 | 20 | 30.7 | 49 | 47.1 | 16 | 25.4 | 17 | 44.7 | 11 | 45.8 |
| Horseback riding | 22 | 28.2 | 18 | 28.6 | 34 | 22.7 | 26 | 41.3 | 14 | 36.8 | 6 | 25.0 |
| Household arts | 2 | 2.6 | 37 | 52.9 | 1 | 1.0 | 41 | 65.1 | 2 | 5.3 | 14 | 58.3 |
| Hunting | 31 | 39.7 | 7 | 10.0 | 70 | 67.3 | 11 | 17.5 | 27 | 71.1 | 5 | 20.8 |
| Participation in music | 20 | 25.6 | 34 | 48.6 | 20 | 19.2 | 24 | 38.1 | 9 | 23.7 | 10 | 41.7 |
| Spectator, music | 43 | 55.1 | 52 | 74.3 | 34 | 32.7 | 46 | 73.0 | 16 | 42.1 | 18 | 75.0 |
| Participation, outdoor sports | 60 | 76.9 | 45 | 64.3 | 85 | 81.7 | 50 | 79.4 | 33 | 86.8 | 19 | 79.2 |
| Spectator, outdoor sports | 53 | 67.9 | 27 | 38.6 | 79 | 76.1 | 47 | 74.6 | 22 | 57.9 | 18 | 75.0 |
| Painting, sculpture, graphic arts | 17 | 21.8 | 18 | 25.7 | 9 | 8.7 | 11 | 17.5 | 4 | 10.5 | 4 | 16.7 |
| Photography | 14 | 17.4 | 9 | 12.9 | 25 | 24.0 | 8 | 12.7 | 9 | 23.7 | 1 | 4.2 |
| Reading | 35 | 44.9 | 50 | 71.4 | 41 | 39.4 | 46 | 73.0 | 12 | 31.6 | 20 | 83.3 |
| Television | 31 | 39.7 | 22 | 31.4 | 58 | 55.8 | 38 | 60.3 | 10 | 26.3 | 8 | 33.3 |
| Travel, sightseeing | 48 | 61.5 | 49 | 70.0 | 61 | 58.7 | 41 | 65.1 | 20 | 52.6 | 15 | 63.5 |
| Others not classifiable | 17 | 21.8 | 10 | 10.0 | 22 | 21.2 | 1 | 1.6 | 5 | 13.2 | 1 | 4.2 |

*Number of persons in this group checking this interest.

†Percentage of persons in this group checking this interest.

The data collected on the recreational interests of teacher education students is presented in somewhat more detail than in S9 above. From this table, the reader may learn the percentage of each group that checked each recreational interest, and also compare the relative popularity of each recreational activity for the different groups, and for men versus women.

For men preferring a position in the large city school, the four most popular recreation interests in descending order of popularity are: (1) participation in outdoor sports, (2) spectator of outdoor

sports, (3) travel and sight-seeing, and spectator of musical activities, e.g., as concerts. For men who prefer a teaching position in a small rural school, preferences are: (1) participation in outdoor sports, (2) hunting, (3) fishing, and (4) spectator of outdoor sports. Women who prefer a teaching position in a large city school most frequently checked spectator of musical activities, reading, travel and sight-seeing, and participation in outdoor sports. The most popular recreational activities for women who prefer teaching positions in small rural schools are: (1) reading, (2) spectator of music activities, (3) participation in outdoor sports, and (4) spectator of outdoor sports.

The data presented in Table S10 could be of considerable value to the school administrator. *The obvious relationship between recreational activities and job preferences suggest that detailed information on the recreational activities available in a given area would be useful in helping teacher education students select a position, and would probably reduce the turnover of teachers in small rural schools.*